



Designation: D6045 – 20

Standard Test Method for Color of Petroleum Products by the Automatic Tristimulus Method¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D6045; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reappraisal. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

1. Scope*

1.1 This test method covers the automatic determination of color of a wide variety of petroleum products such as undyed motor and aviation gasoline, aviation turbine fuels, naphthas, kerosine, pharmaceutical white oils, diesel fuel oils, heating oils, and lubricating oils by the automatic tristimulus method. This test method correlates to Test Method **D156** and Test Method **D1500** as calculated by the instrumentation.

NOTE 1—With the appropriate sample handling, this test method would apply to petroleum waxes, but they were not used in the round robin, and the precision of this test method with regard to waxes is unknown.

1.2 This test method reports results in terms of Test Method **D156** or Test Method **D1500**.

1.3 This test method has a one-to-one correlation for the entire range of Test Method **D1500** ASTM Color and for the range from 0 to +30 for Test Method **D156** Saybolt color.

1.4 This test method does not apply to solid samples, petroleum products containing dye, and petroleum products having extreme fluorescence.

1.5 This test method does not apply to cloudy samples. Such samples shall be filtered so they are clear before measuring.

1.6 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.7 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.8 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

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2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D156 Test Method for Saybolt Color of Petroleum Products (Saybolt Chromometer Method)

D1500 Test Method for ASTM Color of Petroleum Products (ASTM Color Scale)

D2500 Test Method for Cloud Point of Petroleum Products and Liquid Fuels

D4057 Practice for Manual Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products

E284 Terminology of Appearance

E308 Practice for Computing the Colors of Objects by Using the CIE System

2.2 *Energy Institute Standard:*

IP 17 Determination of Colour—Lovibond Tintometer³

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:*

3.1.1 *ASTM color, n*—the name of an empirical scale of expressing the color of a petroleum liquid darker than Saybolt color based on a scale of 0.5 (lightest) to 8.0 Dil (darkest) and determined by Test Method **D1500**.

3.1.2 *CIE*—the abbreviation for the French title of the International Commission on Illumination, or Commission Internationale de l’Eclairage. **E284**

3.1.3 *CIE Standard Illuminant C, n*—Colorimetric illuminant, representing daylight with a correlated color temperature of 6774 K, defined by the CIE in terms of a relative spectral power distribution. **E284**

3.1.4 *CIE 1931 standard observer, n*—ideal colorimetric observer with color matching functions $x(\lambda)$, $y(\lambda)$, $z(\lambda)$ corresponding to a field of view subtending a 2° angle on the retina; commonly called the “2° Standard Observer.” **E284**

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee **D02** on Petroleum Products, Liquid Fuels, and Lubricants and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee **D02.05** on Properties of Fuels, Petroleum Coke and Carbon Material.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard’s Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ *Methods for Analysis Testing*, available from Energy Institute, 61 New Cavendish St., London, W1G 7AR, U.K.

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

3.1.5 *Saybolt color, n*—the name of an empirical scale for expressing of the color of a clear petroleum liquid based on a scale of –16 (darkest) to +30 (lightest) and determined by Test Method **D156**.

3.1.6 *tristimulus values, n*—The amounts of three specified stimuli required to match a color.

3.1.6.1 *Discussion*—In the CIE system, they are assigned the symbols X, Y, and Z. **E284**

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 The sample is poured into the glass sample container, and the container is placed into the light path of the automatic instrument. A transmittance measurement is performed in order to determine the CIE tristimulus values (under CIE Standard Illuminant C and the CIE 1931 Standard Observer) of the sample in question. These are then converted instrumentally by the appropriate algorithm to Saybolt color or ASTM color values.

4.2 The color of the sample is reported in either Test Method **D156** or Test Method **D1500** values, as appropriate.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Determination of the color of petroleum products is used mainly for manufacturing control purposes and is an important quality characteristic because color is readily observed by the user of the product. In some cases the color may serve as an indication of the degree of refinement of the material. When the color range of a particular product is known, a variation outside the established range may indicate possible contamination with another product. However, color is not always a reliable guide to product quality and should not be used indiscriminately in product specifications.

6. Apparatus

6.1 Either instrument described in **6.1.1** or **6.1.2** may be used in this test method.

6.1.1 *Spectrophotometer*—The spectrophotometer used in the measurement shall satisfy the following specifications:

6.1.1.1 *Wavelength Range*—380 nm to 780 nm.

6.1.1.2 *Effective Wavelength Width*—The effective wavelength width of the radiant flux from the slit of the spectrophotometer shall be 10 nm \pm 2 nm or 5 nm \pm 1 nm.

6.1.1.3 *Linearity*— ± 0.5 % of full scale. Photometric reproducibility— ± 0.2 %.

6.1.1.4 *Wavelength Accuracy*— ± 1 nm.

6.1.1.5 *Geometrical Conditions*—Normal illumination and collection. The illumination light flux shall not include a ray which has an angle of five or more degrees toward the central line. The angle of the center line inclination of the illumination flux shall be 0° \pm 2° toward the normal line of the sample surface.

6.1.1.6 The spectrophotometer shall have the capability to compute tristimulus values (CIE XYZ) using CIE Standard Illuminant C and the CIE 1931 Standard Observer.

6.1.1.7 A spectrophotometer that gives results comparable to those of the instrument described in **6.1.1.1** through **6.1.1.6** shall be satisfactory.

6.1.2 *Tristimulus Filter Colorimeter*—Instrument designed for high precision color measurement of clear liquids. The instrument shall be capable of converting the light transmitted by a sample (under normal illumination/normal detection) into tristimulus values (CIE XYZ) using the CIE Standard Illuminant C and the CIE 1931 Standard Observer using Practice **E308**. A correlation between measured tristimulus values and Test Method **D1500** and Test Method **D156** numbers shall be used to yield an equivalent instrumental ASTM color, or Saybolt value, or both. The instrument shall be capable of automatically computing ASTM color or Saybolt values, or both (see Section 12).

6.1.3 *Sample Cell*—Sample cell shall be clean, clear, colorless, and unaffected by the petroleum product being measured. Cells with path lengths of 33 mm have been found suitable for measuring ASTM color, and cells with path lengths of 100 mm have been found suitable for measuring Saybolt values. The operator shall follow the instrument manufacturer's procedures and recommendations.

6.2 *Ultrasonic Bath, Unheated*—(optional), of suitable dimensions to hold container(s) placed inside of bath, for use in effectively dissipating and removing air or gas bubbles that can be entrained in viscous sample types prior to analysis.

7. Reagents and Materials

7.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Reagent grade chemicals shall be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents shall conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society⁴ where such specifications are available. Other grades may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

7.2 *Diluent*—Kerosine (**Warning**—Combustible. Vapor harmful.) having a color of +21 saybolt color or lighter by this test method or Test Method **D156**, or 1.5 by method B of IP 17. This material is used for diluting dark samples to be measured for ASTM color. As an alternative, other solvents, such as white oil or solvent neutral 100 of satisfactory purity that meet the color requirements specified here in **7.2**, are also acceptable.

8. Sampling

8.1 Samples shall be taken in accordance with Practice **D4057**.

8.2 For some sample types, such as viscous lube oils that are prone to having entrained air or gas bubbles present in the sample, the use of an ultrasonic bath (see **6.2**) without the heater turned on (if so equipped), has been found effective in dissipating bubbles typically within 10 min.

⁴ *ACS Reagent Chemicals, Specifications and Procedures for Reagents and Standard-Grade Reference Materials*, American Chemical Society, Washington, DC. For suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Analar Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.

9. Preparation of Sample

9.1 *Liquid Petroleum Products such as Lubricating Oils*—If the sample is not clear, heat it 6 °C (10 °F) above its cloud point (see Test Method **D2500**) and observe the color at that temperature. When the sample is darker than ASTM Color 8, mix 15 volumes of the sample into 85 volumes of the kerosine, and test the mixture.

10. Procedure

10.1 *Calibration*—Prepare the spectrophotometer or tristimulus filter colorimeter for operation following the manufacturer’s instructions.

10.1.1 Periodic measurement of suitable Test Method **D1500** or Test Method **D156**, or both, comparative samples would verify instrumental performance. Refer to the manufacturer’s documentation for specific details. A method for creating suitable samples is included in **Appendix X1**.

10.1.2 Basic calibration procedures are given in **Appendix X2**.

10.2 *Measurement*—Place the cell filled with the sample in the instrument, and measure according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

10.3 Record the ASTM color value or Saybolt number as appropriate.

11. Report

11.1 Report the following information:

11.1.1 The color of the sample as either Saybolt color to the nearest whole number or ASTM color according to the following procedure: (1) for results with decimal numerical values of $x.1$ to $x.4$, precede the value with the capital letter “L” or with a “<” and change the decimal value to $x.5$ (for example, for 3.1–3.4, report L3.5 ASTM color or <3.5 ASTM color); (2) for results with decimal numerical values of $x.5$, report as stated (for example, for 3.5, report 3.5 ASTM color); (3) for results with decimal numerical values $x.6$ – $x.9$, precede the value with the capital letter “L” or with a “<” and round up to the next larger whole value (for example, for 3.6–3.9, report as L4 ASTM color or <4 ASTM color); (4) for results with decimal numerical values of $x.0$, report as stated (for example, for 4.0 report as 4.0 ASTM color); (5) for results greater than 8.0, report as D8 ASTM color or >8 ASTM color.

11.1.2 If the sample has been diluted in accordance with **7.2**, report the color of the mixture followed by the abbreviation “Dil,” for example, “L7.5 Dil ASTM color” or “<7.5 Dil ASTM color” (see **Note 2**).

NOTE 2—For samples that are diluted in **11.1.2**, it is permissible for the laboratory to annotate the report in any suitable manner, provided that the information clearly conveys to the data recipient that the sample analyzed was diluted.

11.1.3 When the sample has been filtered, add the words, “sample filtered.”

12. Precision and Bias

12.1 A correlation has been derived between the manual Test Method **D156** Saybolt color and the manual Test Method **D1500** ASTM color, and this automatic method in a cooperative program involving five laboratories and ten petroleum materials. Data were generated in 1993 and details and statistical analyses are on file at ASTM Headquarters.⁵

12.2 *Precision*—The precision of this test method as obtained by statistical examination of interlaboratory test results is as follows:

12.2.1 *Repeatability*—The difference between successive test results obtained by the same operator with the same apparatus under constant operating conditions on identical test material would, in the long run, in the normal and correct operation of the test method, exceed the following value only in one case in twenty):

12.2.1.1 $r = 0.14$ Saybolt color units (Test Method **D156**).

12.2.1.2 $r = 0.10$ ASTM color units (Test Method **D1500**).

12.2.2 *Reproducibility*—The difference between two single and independent test results obtained by different operators working in different laboratories on identical test material would, in the long run, in the normal and correct operation of the test method, exceed the following value only in one case in twenty:

12.2.2.1 $R = 1.24$ (correlation with Test Method **D156**).

12.2.2.2 $R = 0.48$ (correlation with Test Method **D1500**).

12.3 *Bias*:

12.3.1 There is no bias in the correlation between this test method and Test Method **D1500**.

12.3.2 There is no bias in the correlation between this test method and Test Method **D156** in the range from 0 to +30. There is a bias for the range from 0 to –16.

13. Keywords

13.1 ASTM color; automatic colorimeter; color measurement; petroleum products color; Saybolt; tristimulus

⁵ Supporting data have been filed at ASTM International Headquarters and may be obtained by requesting Research Report RR:D02-1356. Contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org.